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UNCLAS KATHMANDU 001744

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR SA/INS AND DS/IP/SA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [MOPS](#) [NP](#)

SUBJECT: NEPAL: MAOIST BOMBS IN THE CAPITAL; BATTLES IN WESTERN DISTRICTS

REF: KATHMANDU 1740

1. (SBU) Summary: One person was killed and twelve injured after Maoist insurgents set off a series of six bomb blasts in Kathmandu and its environs on the morning of September 8. The explosions are believed intended to intimidate the general population into observing a general strike, or "bandh," called by the Maoists for September 18. At least 50 insurgents and four Royal Nepal Army (RNA) soldiers have been killed in fighting in the western districts of Achham, Parbat, and Rolpa, according to the RNA spokesman. The Embassy's Emergency Action Committee will meet on September 9 to assess again the security situation.

2. (U) On the morning of September 8, Maoist insurgents set off a series of improvised explosive devices in six different locations in Kathmandu and its environs. Each of the explosions took place at or near a local government office. In all, twelve people were injured and one--a 10-year-old student walking to school--was killed when a bomb exploded near the Central Bank and Prime Minister's Residence in Baluwatar in Kathmandu. The IEDs (pressure cookers with a timing device) were likely set off to publicize--and to intimidate the general population into observing--the upcoming general strike, or "bandh," called by the Maoists for September 18.

3. (SBU) The Embassy activated its warden network to alert the American community to the explosions (Reftel) and has convened an Emergency Action Committee meeting for September 9.

4. (SBU) Maoist insurgents have also engaged the Royal Nepal Army (RNA) in three different locations in the western and mid-western districts of Achham, Parbat, and Rolpa September 7-8. At least two soldiers have been reported killed in Achham and two in Rolpa. RNA spokesman Col. Deepak Gurung estimated that at least 50 Maoists had been killed in the engagements.

5. (SBU) Comment: September 18 will mark the first strike called by the Maoists since they unilaterally broke off the ceasefire and resumed hostilities against the Government of Nepal on August 27. The coordinated series of bomb attacks follows a well-established Maoist practice of preceding their strikes with a campaign of urban terror to intimidate the general public and thus ensure compliance with the strike. We can expect more such attacks, unfortunately, in the days to come. While we have no evidence that the Maoists will attempt to target American citizens in this campaign, we will continue to monitor the situation closely.

MALINOWSKI